

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS  
GROUP

12 May 1948

TO: Estimates Group

SUBJECT: Suggested ORE

1. It is increasingly apparent that the only effective antidote to the aggressive policies of the USSR in Europe and the post-war European economic chaos is a unified Western European approach to these problems. The western nations have partly realized this, and have undertaken numerous cooperative measures which are the first steps toward ultimate political, economic, and military integration. US policy, too, encourages a greater degree of Western European integration as essential both to European recovery and to the related problem of defense against the USSR. However, it is not at all certain that the divergent interests and national jealousies of the Western European nations will permit effective integration. Consequently, some analysis of the "Prospects for Western European Integration" would be a desirable aid in the formulation of US policy. Such a study would examine the need for European cooperation and integration, the factors (pro and con) bearing on the problem, steps taken to date, and likely future trends.

2. Among the factors bearing on the problem, the following appear worthy of consideration:

a. The individual attitudes of the various states: the influence of nationalism on their willingness to cooperate fully with other states and/or give up part of their sovereignty -- their divergent interests, especially the conflict of European and extra-European interests in the UK and the feeling of some states that they can remain neutral.

b. The underlying barriers to full integration of widely dissimilar countries: differences in languages, nationality, laws, political forms, economies, etc.

c. Forces tending toward unification: fear of the USSR and the overriding need for united defense against her; the essential indivisibility of the European recovery problem; the longer range problem of maintaining a viable Western European economy and body politic in a Europe split between East and West and deprived of much of its former overseas economic resources.

3. The following existing developments looking toward greater European integration might be considered as evidence of the trend toward integration:

- a. Western Union.
- b. The unified approach to European recovery through the CEEC and subsidiary bodies like the multilateral compensation group.
- c. Customs Unions: Benelux, Franco-Italian and the European customs union study group.
- d. The UN Economic Commission for Europe.
- e. The Trades Union Advisory Committee for ERP.
- f. The International Socialist Conference.
- g. The Congress of Europe at the Hague and its constituent movements.

4. The suggested ORE would not seek to analyze these factors in detail but to examine their bearing on the overall problem of European integration and arrive at some estimate of the degree of integration Europe is likely to achieve, both in the short and long term. Since US policy evidently envisages a greater degree of European cooperation and integration, such a study would help provide a sound foundation for determination of this policy.

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